

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JERUSA 00855 101504Z

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 /069 W

-----110216Z 019816 /65

R 101400Z JUN 77

FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9073

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, IS, JO

SUBJ: ISRAELI ACADEMICS DISCUSS 10 YEARS OF OCCUPATION

1. SUMMARY: CONCURRING THAT 10 YEARS OF OCCUPATION HAD NOT RECOGNIZED THE WEST BANK ARABS TO A PERMANENT ISRAELI PRESENCE, PARTICIPANTS IN THE TRUMAN INSTITUTE SEMINAR ON THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES DIFFERED ON THE WISDOM OF CURRENT OCCUPATION POLICY. MOST CONCEDED STRONG PLO INFLUENCE ON THE WEST BANK, BUT INSISTED A JORDANIAN OPTION EXISTED. UNEASE REGISTERED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF PLO INVOLVEMENT OF NEW FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS. INTERESTING REMARKS ON ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

2. ISRAELI ACADEMICS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE TRUMAN INSTITUTE'S SEMINARY ON "JERUSALEM AND THE ADMINISTERED TERRITORIES 1967-77" ON JUNE 9 AT THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY DEALT WITH A NUMBER OF
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PAGE 02 JERUSA 00855 101504Z

SUBJECTS OF INTEREST RANGING FROM ISRAELI CONDUCT OF THE OCCUPATION TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE WEST BANK COMMUNIST PARTY.

3. THE JORDANIAN OPTION. CONCEDED THAT 10 YEARS OF OCCUPATION HAD WON THE ISRAELIS FEW FRIENDS ON THE WEST BANK (IN CONTRAST TO INITIAL HOPEFUL

EXPECTATIONS), PARTICIPANTS FOUND EVIDENCE THAT WEST BANKERS STILL ENTERTAINED THE JORDANIAN OPTION AS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE. DR. A. BAILY OF TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY POINTED TO EDITORIALS OF AL QUDS, THE VISITS OF WEST BANK MAYORS TO AMMAN, AND CONDOLENCES PUBLISHED ON DEATH OF QUEEN ALIA AS PROOFS OF STRONG, RESIDUAL PRO-HASHEMITE TIES. PROFESSOR AMNON COHEN (FORMERLY ARAB AFFAIRS ADVISOR TO THE MILGOV) AGREED THAT EXPONENTS OF A HASEMITE FEDERAL SOLUTION HAD GAINED GROUND DURING THE LAST YEAR AFTER THE PLO'S SETBACK IN LEBANON. HE NOTED THAT WEST BANK PUBLIC OPINION WAS VOLATILE AND ACCUSTOMED TO TAKING ITS CUES FROM ABROAD.

4. CONDUCT OF THE OCCUPATION. COHEN DIFFERED WITH DR. M. NISSAN OF THE TRUMAN INSTITUTE ON THE SUCCESS OF THE OCCUPATION. DOWNPLAYING REPORTS OF DEMONSTRATIONS AND OF BAD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPALITIES, COHEN EXPRESSED A FEAR THAT THE PRESENT "NORMAL" SITUATION MIGHT BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY ANY CHANGE IN POLICY (READ, A LIKUD CRACKDOWN.) NISSAN ARGUED THAT THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT HAS MISTAKENLY AGGRANDIZED THE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MUNICIPALITIES AND SUGGESTED A MORE DIRECT ROLE FOR THE MILGOV IN DICTATING MUNICIPAL POLICY.

5. TWIN CITY FUNDING. EMPHASIZING THE ROLE OF THE PLO IN THE TERRITORIES, MR. A. SELA, A GRADUATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 JERUSA 00855 101504Z

STUDENT AT TEL AVIV, ARGUED THAT FUNDS COMING FROM THE PERSIAN GULF REFLECTED A DECISION OF THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL IN CAIRO TO MINIMIZE WEST BANK DEPENDENCE ON THE GOI. OTHER PARTICIPANTS QUESTIONED WHETHER FUNDS WOULD ACTUALLY MATERIALIZE AND WHETHER JORDAN, THROUGH WHICH THE MAYORS AND MONEY HAVE TO PASS, WOULD COOPERATE IN A PLO PROJECT.

6. ACTIVITIES OF WEST BANK PARTIES. COHEN DISMISSED AS SPORADIC AND INEFFECTIVE ALL POLITICAL PARTIES ON THE WEST BANK EXCEPT THE COMMUNIST. COMMUNISTS HE CHARACTERIZED AS WELL ORGANIZED AND HIGHLY MOTIVATED. HE GAVE THE HISTORY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES AS FOLLOWS: FROM 1967-69, THEY SOUGHT A RETURN OF THE WEST BANK TO JORDAN THROUGH PASSIVE RESISTANCE TO ISRAELI OCCUPATION; FROM 1969-72, THEY SOUGHT AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE THROUGH INDEPENDENT (I.E., UNCOORDINATED WITH PLO) ARMED STRUGGLE; FROM 1972 TO PRESENT THEY SOUGHT

INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE THROUGH COOPERATION WITH OTHER NATIONALIST ELEMENTS IN THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL FRONT. DURING THIS LAST PERIOD AFTER INITIAL MILITARY OPERATIONS FAILED, COMMUNISTS RESTRICTED THEMSELVES TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY. WEST BANK COMMUNISTS, ACCORDING TO COHEN, TAKE THEIR ORDER FROM MOSCOW AND STRESS SHORT-TERM COMMON GOALS BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND PALESTINIANS NATIONALIST GROUP.

7. COMMENT: THE CONCLUSION THAT THE KING'S INFLUENCE

ON THE WEST BANK IS ON THE RISE SEEMS TO US BASED ON DUBIOUS EVIDENCE: EDITORIALS IN AL QUDS, A NEWSPAPER WHOSE EDITOR IS THOUGHT, BUT INFORMED PEOPLE, TO RECEIVE SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 JERUSA 00855 101504Z

GOJ; TRIPS-AS YET, FRUITLESS-BY SOME MAYORS LATE IN 1976 TO AMMAN AND NEWSPAPER MEMORIALS TO ALIA, A MINIMAL COURTESY SINCE MOST MAYORS REFUSED TO PAY CONDOLENCES IN PERSON. AT THE SAME TIME, WHAT IS IGNORED IS THE WEST BANK'S ALMOST UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR THE DECISIONS OF THE 13TH PNC, THE STRONG DESIRE BY WEST BANKERS TO ATTEND THE PNC AND THE MUNICIPALITIES' ALMOST FRENZIED RESPONSE TO THE TWIN CITY PROJECT FOR WHICH THE PLO IS GIVEN CREDIT. ALL THIS DESPITE THE PLO'S GRAVE SETBACK IN LEBANON. THE WEST BANK'S UNDENIABLE SUSCEPTIBILITY TO OUTSIDE PRESSURE MUST BE WEIGHED AGAINST WHAT WE SEE AS ORGANIC (I.E. FAMILIAL AND EMOTIONAL) LINKS TO THE PLO. THESE LINKS ARE IGNORED BY THE ISRAELIS WHO PREFER THE IMAGE OF THE PLO AS AN ALIEN, IMPOSED LEADERSHIP. SIGNIFICANTLY, ISRAELI ACADEMICS ALSO ASSUME THAT KING HUSSEIN WOULD AND COULD TAKE BACK THE TROUBLESOME WEST BANK ON ALMOST ANY TERMS. NO SPEAKER, FOR EXAMPLE, CONCERN HIMSELF WITH WHAT CONSTRAINTS EAST BANKERS AND, PARTICULARLY, THE ARMY MIGHT IMPOSE ON THE KING'S POLICY. LIKE A FATHER WITH A HEADSTRONG DAUGHTER, THE ISRAELIS INSIST THE NE'ER-DO-WELL SUITOR IS NOT REALLY DESIRED AND ASSUME THAT THE SAFE SOBER ONE IS EVER READY AND WAITING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MILITARY OCCUPATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977JERUSA00855
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770208-0801
Format: TEL
From: JERUSALEM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770670/aaaacjaz.tel
Line Count: 165
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f13a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2202940
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI ACADEMICS DISCUSS 10 YEARS OF OCCUPATION
TAGS: PINS, PBOR, IS, JO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f13a667f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009